

MASSACHUSETTS PAROLE BOARD

PAROLE NEWS



(from left) Institutional Parole Officer Millane Williams, Undersecretary of Criminal Justice Mary Elizabeth Heffernan, Parole Officer Linda Morancy, and Massachusetts Parole Board Chairman Maureen E. Walsh during a ceremony this month honoring IPO Williams and PO Morancy as Parole Officers of the Year.

Two Parole Officers Honored by Executive Office of Public Safety, Parole Board

Women were prominently featured this month when two parole officers were honored by the Massachusetts Parole Board with the “Parole Officer of the Year” award as part of the American Probation and Parole Association’s annual Probation, Parole, and Community Supervision Week. The event, held annually by the Kentucky-based association, is intended to provide an opportunity for those in

community supervision to be recognized.

Out of 15 nominees, two women were selected—Linda Morancy, a field parole officer who covers the Lawrence areas, and Millane Williams, a parole officer who supervises the Suffolk County House of Correction. Parole officers working in the institutions calculate parole eligibility dates and prepare files of information for board

members about cases that are up for parole.

“They are both excellent PO’s,” said Acting Chief of Transitional Services, Lynn Ferraris of PO Morancy and PO Williams. “They are quiet and unassuming, but they....go well beyond the scope of their duties.”

Agency staff received a letter from Secretary of Public Safety Kevin Burke,

expressing his appreciation for the “important contribution to public safety” made by all staff at the Parole Board. The letter coincided with community supervision week, which was observed this year on July 15-21.

Referring the parole officers as “dedicated professionals” who advise, counsel, and
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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

PAROLE BOARD CHAIRMAN MAUREEN E. WALSH

This month we celebrated National Parole and Probation Officer's Week and, with the support of the Executive Office of Public Safety, had an event in our central office recognizing the importance of our re-entry work. Events like this give us an opportunity to properly thank all of the staff for their tireless efforts in making the Commonwealth a safer place to live.



Stating that your job function is “to ensure public safety by safely reintegrating offenders” may be an accurate manner to describe the work at Parole. However, while this description may be easy to state, it is difficult to accomplish and to define exactly what it means to be a “good” parole officer. Sometimes—often too many of the times, it is in what I call the “quiet victories” that you are successful—whether it be in assisting an offender to get a job or a driver's license or in monitoring compliance with drug treatment. We all know that this will never make front page news—even on the slowest day—but that preventing future crime is one of the most challenging tasks that could be asked of you. And yet you do this every day.

We understand that the delicate balance of being both supporter and supervisor can be no easy task and can be subject to countless “Monday Morning Quarterbacking” sessions. However, when done properly, it appears seamless and flawless. I realize that this agency has had many “quiet victories” as a result of your hard work as well as some very public victories and accomplishments. You are professionals that are constantly acquiring knowledge to understand what motivates offenders to change and apply that knowledge is the most effective way possible.

Now it seems as if the role of parole has moved beyond surveillance and supervision. It has transcended to the community in an effort to involve many different partners in our efforts because we all realize that effective reentry is not just a criminal justice problem—it is a mental health problem, it is a public health problem, it is a housing problem and the list goes on and on. Your work has expanded exponentially to include working with victims in a much more involved capacity.

Nationally, we know that by the end of 2005 there were almost 5 million adults under parole and probation supervision. This number does not include juveniles. And the numbers are climbing. Here in Massachusetts, the numbers are equally as impressive and astonishing. For a relatively speaking small agency of about 230 people statewide, the numbers tell the true story of the hard work that I want to congratulate you for:

Just for example, did you know that the agency:

- Supervised over 8,000 offenders last year alone.
- That 80% of the parole population successfully discharged their parole obligations—this number stands in stark contrast to what we know are the recidivism numbers in the Commonwealth of more than ½ of all offenders returning to incarceration.
- That there were over 50,000 drug screens.
- 20,000 votes were processed last year by this agency. (Continued on P. 4)

PAROLE OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

LINDA MORANCY, PO

Parole Officer Linda Morancy first worked for the Massachusetts Parole Board as a Northeastern University undergraduate studying criminal justice. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1981 she sought her first full-time job at parole, but found that, as a woman, the highest post she could attain was clerk. Because she wanted to work in the field, not in an office, PO Morancy decided to shift temporarily to the private sector, working for several years with insurance and investment companies while waiting to take the parole officer exam.

Her patience paid off, and by 1985 she was a Junior Parole Officer at MCI Norfolk. Shortly after taking the position, she transferred to Walpole, then to Concord, and then to Boston State Pre-release. Moving up the proverbial ladder with an almost unheard of quickness, in 1987 she became an Institutional Parole Officer at the Old Deer Island facility. She modestly attributes her upward mobility not to skill but to "good timing."

PO Morancy was only at Deer Island for a short time, however—(continued on p. 4)



MILLANE WILLIAMS, IPO,

After receiving a B.S. in Criminal Justice from Salem State University, Millane Williams worked in the research department at the Department of Corrections. She decided to take the Transitional Parole Officer exam in the mid-1980s and became a Transitional Parole Officer [TPO] in 1986, working for two years at MCI-Norfolk and Concord before becoming a Parole Officer 2 (what is now known as an Institutional Parole Officer—a supervisor) at the old Deer Island facility in 1988. Deer Island is now the Suffolk County House Correction with a total population of 1,900 inmates.

For as long as she can remember, said IPO Williams, women have been in charge of institutional services. While this hasn't changed over the years, a new development has been the increasing emphasis on reintegration. "The focus has changed overall which is a good thing," she observed. "Since Maureen has been onboard, she's done a fabulous job." In addition, she said, both her supervisors and staff have played an instrumental role throughout her career. "Having supervisors that are accessible and knowledgeable makes my job so much easier—Marcia Hill, Marcia Curtin, and Lynn [Ferraris] play a big part—and the staff here is wonderful. If it wasn't for their hard work, the award wouldn't happen. It's not a Millane award, it's a Suffolk award..."(continued on p. 4)



IPO of the Year Millane Williams credits great staff, managers

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...there's no 'I' in team."

IPO Williams has been in charge of parole's Suffolk staff for almost twenty years and now supervises two Word Processing Operators and four Transitional Parole Officers. Her staff works with a population of about 2,200 inmates, including parolees on the bracelet program and parolees in the Boston Pre-release facility.

Being in charge at Suffolk means

managing one of the busiest institutions in the state. About 35 parole hearings are conducted there per week, according to Acting Chief of Field Services Lynn Ferraris, and transitional parole officers comb through twice as many cases—at least 60—to determine who is eligible for parole hearings.

For another supervisor, such a frenetic environment could be drain-

ing, but it doesn't phase IPO Williams. Suffolk is really one of the busiest institutions, she said, because many of the inmates are serving short sentences. In addition, the office is supposed to be staffed with six Transitional Parole Officers, but a lot of people come and go.

PO of the Year Linda Morancy:

Career-long dedication to working in the field (continued from p. 3)

—from March to November of 1987—before she achieved her ultimate goal—to be a parole officer in the field. Her first field position was at the Region 3 parole office in Somerville (the office no longer exists) and stayed there until deciding to apply for a hearing examiner position in the late nineties. She describes herself as having been in limbo before making this decision, working on a reentry initiative as a reentry officer and moving back and forth between the Somerville and Worcester field parole offices.

After her stint as a hearing examiner which ended around 2002, PO Morancy was again assigned to the field, this time to the Region 6 (Lawrence area) office where she now manages a caseload of roughly 40-50 parolees from the Lawrence area. "I loved what I did," she remarked about working in the field, noting that she was elated to return there. "I like the social worker part of it. I like working with the parolees and their families," she said. Although some of her parolees are inevitably rearrested,

some of them manage to get on the right track, and it is these success stories that "keep you motivated," she said. But when her parolees make mistakes, "you've got to get it into your head not to take it personally."

PO Morancy is one of five female parole officers working at the Lawrence office (there are a total of 11 PO's there) and she insists she is usually reluctant to seek out the lime-light. But her fellow Region 6 officers didn't let her off the hook. After she won the award, they crowned her with a tiara, draped her with a banner, and photographed her.

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

PAROLE BOARD CHAIRMAN MAUREEN E. WALSH *(Continued from P.2)*

- The Field completed 18,000 home and work investigations and there were 100,000 contacts with parolees during the year.
- The Victim Service Unit provided services to over 5,000 victims of crime.

Parole officers make a substantial contribution to the safety of our citizens by supervising and supporting criminal offenders returning to the community. I am here to recognize the fact that both inside the institution and outside in the community, Massachusetts parole officers are doing their best in ensuring that offenders become law abiding, productive and responsible members of the community. It has been my honor to work with you!

Parole Officer of the Year Awards *(continued from p. 1)*

...supervise those under community supervision, in Massachusetts, Secretary Burke said that parole was an essential component to maintaining public safety. Successful reintegration of former offenders is, he wrote, a "major priority" for the Executive Office of Public Safety. "On behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and in particular the Executive Office of Public Safety, I would like to thank you for helping to make our homes and communities safer places in which to live and work," he wrote.

Six parole officers from the institutions were selected as nominees for the Parole Officer of the Year Award. The nominees from the field were chosen by the supervisors in charge of each regional office. From those two lists, the deputy chiefs and acting chiefs made a recommendation to Chairman Maureen E. Walsh about which nominee should receive the award.

Darlene Goss, the Transitional Parole Officer from the Hampden County Correctional Center, was nominated for her ability to be a "team player" and her consistency in going the extra miles in executing her duties and working with others." Joanne Breton, the Institutional Parole Offi-



Field Parole Officer nominees for Parole Officer of the Year award stand together during a ceremony this month. *(From left)* PO Michael Joyce, Region 1, Kevin Keefe, Region 7, Kevin Devlin, Region 2, Eric Mawhinney, Region 4, Gary Burt, Region 5, Brian McGaffigan, Region 8, Stephanie Belli, Region 9, Bob Jackson from the Warrant and Apprehension Unit, and Parole Board Chairman Maureen E. Walsh.

cer at the Worcester County House of Correction who has worked with the agency for more than 25 years was nominated for her "tireless efforts and significant contributions." Donna Fentiman, the Institutional Parole Officer at MCI Norfolk was nominated for her availability and willingness to assist in any area of need at the Norfolk/Cedar Junction complex. David Stanford, the PO at MCI Framingham and Gary Nevins of the Massachusetts Treatment Center were also nominated for their skills, knowledge, and dedication.

From the field, Mike Joyce was nominated by the Region 1 parole office for his good work-

ing relationship with the Boston Police Department, his work on special projects, and his connections to shelters and programs on Long Island.

Kevin Devlin was nominated by the Region 2 parole office for his reputation as a fair and decent person with an "exceptional sense of humor," who, when there is no risk to public safety, is always ready to find reasonable alternatives to incarceration and is well-respected by parolees and their families.

Eric Mawhinney was nominated by the Region 4 parole office for his innovativeness,

dedication, and positive energy, while Gary Burt of the Region 5 office was nominated because of his 30 years of service to the agency and his ability to work effectively while being almost entirely on his own since the region he covers is far away from the Springfield parole office.

The Region 7 parole office nominated Kevin Keefe, who has been working for the agency for 27 years and "exceeds agency standards on a regular basis," according to his supervisors.

Brian McGaffigan was nominated by his supervisors at the Region 8 parole officer in New Bedford "as an exceptional PO" who consistently demonstrates the ability to manage his caseload in its entirety," always submits work early, and who is an excellent writer and communicator.

Stephanie Belli was nominated by the Region 9 office for performing at a high level of competence, keeping her caseload in order, and being able to manage multiple tasks such as making arrests, taking trips, and covering the office simultaneously. The Warrant and Apprehension Unit nominated Parole Officer Bob Jackson for being an "intelligent, resourceful, and tireless" worker.